



Reef Medics to the Rescue

What is the Reef Medics Program?

Reef Medics is a new volunteer program that gives trained volunteers the opportunity to assist Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Biologists with the restoration of natural marine resources impacted by vessel groundings within the Florida Keys. The Reef Medics program is administered by the Sanctuary in conjunction with the State of Florida's Department of Environmental Protection, The Nature Conservancy, and Mote Marine Laboratory.



A Reef Medic volunteer moves a broken elkhorn coral branch to a suitable that is substrate for reattachment.

What do Reef Medics Volunteers do?

The primary focus of the Reef Medics program is the emergency restabilization of coral colonies injured during vessel grounding incidents. In many cases there are "mystery" or "hit and run" sites where there is no known responsible party to charge with a fine and consequently no funding for repair or restoration. Reef Medics provide the "people power" to help Sanctuary staff save surviving coral colonies and reattach them to suitable reef structure. Reef Medics volunteers may also become involved in a number of related activities including restoring vessel-impacted seagrass beds, using GPS/GIS technology, underwater photography and videography, database management, and producing videos, posters, and other educational materials that support program goals.

How do I become a Reef Medic Volunteer?

For more information about the Reef Medics or to sign up for the next training session, contact:

Bill Goodwin
Reef Medics Program Coordinator
FKNMS Upper Region Office
(305) 852-7717 x 28.



Resource Manager Harold Hudson instructs volunteers in cement-making, one of the most important aspects of reef repair work.



*Note: This article appeared in the Fall 2002 issue of the newsletter of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, **Sounding Line**. For more information, visit: floridakeys.noaa.gov.*